FALL 2011

Friends of Our Water

Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago

Protecting Our Water Environment

The Deep Tunnel

The District adopted the Tunnel and Reservoir Plan (TARP) in 1972 as the Chicago area's plan to cost-effectively comply with Federal and State water quality standards in the 375 square miles combined sewer area consisting of Chicago and 51 suburbs. TARP's main goals are to protect Lake Michigan, the region's drinking water supply from raw sewage pollution; improve water quality of rivers and streams; and provide an outlet for floodwaters to reduce street and basement sewage backup flooding.

Phase I of TARP, intended primarily for pollution control, is made up of four distinct tunnel systems: Mainstream, Des Plaines, Calumet, and Upper Des Plaines. After a storm event, pumping stations dewater the tunnel systems as Water Reclamation Plant (WRP) capacity becomes available, making the tunnel and reservoir capacity available for the next storm event. All captured combined sewer flow pumped to the WRP receives full secondary treatment prior to being discharged to the waterway pursuant to the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permits.

Construction of the Phase I tunnel systems commenced in 1975. The tunnel systems were put into service as portions were completed, starting in 1985. By 2006, all of Phase I was completed and in operation. The total system consists of 109.4 miles of deep, large diameter, rock tunnels providing 2.3 billion gallons (BG) of volume to capture of CSOs that previously discharged at hundreds of outfall locations.

Phase II of TARP consists of reservoirs intended primarily for flood control, but it will also considerably enhance pollution control benefits being provided under Phase I. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' (COE) Chicagoland Underflow Plan (CUP), Final Phase I General Design Memorandum (GDM) of 1986 defined the Federal interest in TARP Phase II based on the Federal National Economic Development Plan criteria. The three reservoirs proposed under TARP Phase II/CUP are: the Majewski, McCook, and Thornton Reservoirs. When all three reservoirs are completed, the reservoirs will increase the TARP system storage volume to 17.5 BG.

Source: www.mwrd.org

FloodSmart.Gov

With forecasts predicting increased rainfall, Illinois faces the threat of flooding along rivers and tributaries throughout the state. Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is encouraging individuals, families and businesses to prepare for flooding by purchasing a flood insurance policy, as there is a 30-day waiting period before a flood insurance policy takes effect.

Over the past 20 years, there have been numerous flood disasters in Illinois, 19 of which have been significant enough to warrant disaster declarations by the President. A claim on a flood insurance policy can be filed after any flooding event whether or not it is declared a disaster by the President.

The average cost of a flood insurance premium in Illinois is about $740 a year – just $2 a day for financial protection from what could be devastating effects of a flood in a home or business. Flood insurance policies can be purchased for both the property and contents; an insurance agent can tailor a policy to fit specific needs.

Find out more about flood insurance and your flood risk online at: www.floodsmart.gov or Call 1-888-379-9531.

Source: www.floodsmart.gov

Town Hall Meeting

If you would like to have representatives from the MWRD come and answer questions about flooding please contact us at (312)-751-5650 or Mariyana.Spyropoulos@mwrd.org